(c) Oral Rehydration Therapy Programme

Since the programme is not preventive in nature, it is not possible to fix any physical targets.

[*English*]

River Action Plan

*199. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY:
SHRI RABI RAY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state.

(a) whether the Government propose to launch the National River Action Plan to clean up polluted stretches of major rivers of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the estimated cost of the entire project;

(c) whether the Central Pollution Control Board has indentified such polluted stretches of the rivers in the country,

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the State Governments are to share any cost of the project; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH: (a) to (d) A National River Action Plan for pollution abatement of grossly polluted stretches of major rivers of the country is under formulation.

(e) and (f). The National River Action Plan is proposed to be taken up as a centrally sponsored scheme with sharing of the capital cost of the works on a 50: 50 basis between the Centre and the State Governments.

Eco Destruction of Himalayas

*200. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the satellite data has revealed the eco-destruction of the Himalayas;

(b) the estimated forest cover in the Himalayas at the turn of the century;

(c) the reasons for deforestation of Himalayan slopes; and

(d) the steps being taken to prevent the eco-destruction of the Himalayas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) According the latest assessment of the forest cover made by Forest Survey of India based on the visual interpretation of satellite imageries pertaining to the period 1987-89, on loss of forest cover has been reported in the Himalayan tract, except in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.

(b) According to the National Forest Policy 1988 " the national goal should be to have a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover In the hills and in the mountainous regions the aim should be to maintain two third of the area under such cover in order to prevent erosion and land degradation and to ensure the stability of the fragile eco-system "

Presently forest cover in different Himalayan States/regions varies from as low as 9.03% in Jammu and Kashmir to 82.1% in Arunachal Pradesh averaging to about 39% for the entire Himalayan region. Therefore,

effort would be to achieve the national goal of 66% forest cover in the Himalayan region by the turn of the centuary

(c) According to the 'State of the Forest Report 1991' the loss of forest cover in the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam has been on account of shifting cultivation in Arunachal Pradesh and degradation of dense forest area in Brahmaputra valley in Assam due to biotic pressure.

(d) The Government have taken following steps to preserve Himalayan eco-system and check deforestation

1. The Forest (Conservation) Act enacted in 1980 to check diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes has been made more stringent by an amendment in 1988

2. G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development has been established to evolve effective strategies for management of natural resources and sustainable development

3. An integrated Action Oriented Research Development and Extension Programme in the Himalayan Region has been launched

4. Guidelines have been issued to State Governments from time to time for protection of forests. Some of these guidelines are as follows

   (i) To avoid clear felling of natural forests and where such fellings are inevitable for restoration of crop or other silvicultural considerations, it should be restricted to areas not exceeding 10 hectares in the hills and 25 hectares in the plans.

   (ii) To identify critical areas in the hills and mountains which require protection from felling of forests and need immediate vigorous afforestation

   (iv) A massive afforestation programme including Social Forestry and Agro-forestry under 20 Point Programme is under implementation in all States & UTs.

   (v) Government of India have also issued guidelines for peoples' participation in management and development of degraded forests and their active involvement in afforestation programme

Tribal Culture

*201 SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN. Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state

(a) the steps taken so far by the Government to protect and preserve the tribal culture and heritage,

(b) the funds allocated therefor so far; and

(c) the contribution of the Tribal Research Institutes in the country in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) For the protection and preservation of the Tribal Culture and Heri-